

# THE MOTHERESE ROLE IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROCESS OF ONE-WORD STAGE FOR FIFTEEN MONTHS OLD: PSYCHOLINGUISTICS STUDY

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## Abstract

The phonological deviances happen in children when they imitate the words or phrases spoken by the adults. The objectives of the research are: to describe the phonological structures and identify the motherese in child's one-word stage language acquisition process at fifteen months old. This research design was conducted using qualitative descriptive by observation and interviews, then analyzed through several techniques, namely techniques of displaying and sorting data, reducing, and drawing conclusions. The results showed that the subject produced several words in one-word stages and made mistakes in the phonological structure, namely the simplification consonant and harmony. The most dominant type of motherese is short sentences and simple structures and short and short vocabulary. Parent (caregiver) communication patterns and instructions towards children correlate with the process of producing the number of words.

**Keywords:** Language Acquisition; One-Word Stage; Phonological Deviance; L1

## Abstrak

Proses pemerolehan bahasa pada anak merupakan sebuah awal anak berkembang. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan struktur fonologi dan mengidentifikasi bahasa ibu pada anak usia lima belas bulan pada tahapan satu kata dalam proses pemerolehan bahasa. Desain penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan deskriptif kualitatif menggunakan observasi dan interview, kemudian di analisis melalui beberapa teknik yaitu teknik menampilkan dan memilah data, mereduksi, dan menarik kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian adalah subjek menghasilkan beberapa kata dalam tahapan satu kata dan melakukan kesalahan dalam struktur fonologi yakni *the simplification consonant dan harmony*. Jenis bahasa ibu yang paling dominan yakni kalimat singkat dan struktur yang sederhana dan kosakata pendek dan singkat. Pola dan instruksi komunikasi orang tua (pengasuh) terhadap anak berkorelasi dengan proses memproduksi jumlah kata.

**Kata kunci:** Akuisisi Bahasa; Tahapan Satu Kata; Struktur Fonologi; L1

## INTRODUCTION

This research mainly focuses on Psycholinguistic study. Psycholinguistics is the study of the connections between language and mind (Trask and Stockwell, 2007:237). It aims to find out about the structures and a process of human's ability to speak and understand

language. Scovel (1998:4) argues that, "The use of language and speech as a window to the nature and structure of human mind is called psycholinguistics." So, Psycholinguistic deals of the ability to achieve language in the acquisition process. Since the children were born, they utter many kinds of sounds such as crying, babbling and some words to say something in acquiring language process. Nagata (2001:3-8) explains four steps of child language acquisition. The steps are Pre-language stages that happens during three to ten months, the One-word or Holophrastic stage occurs at twelve to eighteen months, the Two-word stage at eighteen to twenty months, and Telegraphic speech happened at two and three years old. It means that the children do the some process in acquiring the language. In this phase, the given input to the children is absolutely needed (Arifin, 2015).

This research investigated the one-word or holophrastic stage which is occurring at twelve to eighteen months old. Yule (1996:179) says, "Holophrastic is a single form functioning as a phrase or sentence". The single word that is uttered by the children is functioning as whole phrase or sentence. In acquiring the language in the one-word stage, there are phonological deviances. The phonological rules in child language acquisition process are (Radford, 2009:98-99): (a) the consonant simplification: this process is shown by omitting and changing of the consonant in the words. The effect of that process makes words become very simple. Example: spoon became [bu:n], (b) stopping: this process occurs when the words is simplified to the corresponding stop consonant, i.e. [p, d, t] or [t d]. This kind of process could not be found in adult phonologies, because some words turn them into stops, and (c) harmony: This process occurs when the child changes the last

sounds of words. The /d/ of drink becomes [g] in the context of the following /k/.

O'Grady and Dobrovolsky (1992:402) states the children in early age are sensitive to distinguish speech sounds, the ability to distinguish between meaningful words is not yet present. It means that sometimes the children cannot distinguish between words in their language. Finally, there are phonological deviances done by the children. So, the caretakers must help their children to learn the phonological rules in acquiring language.

At a very young age, the role of parents is crucial to the growth of children. According to Malmberg, Lewis, West, Murray, Sylva, and Stein (2016: 1), parental sensitivity can play an important role in children's cognitive and language development, while the higher sensitivity of one parent can compensate for the the less sensitive parents. Zauche, Mahoney, Thul, Zauche, Weldon, and Stapel-Wax (2017: 493) support the previous statement, pointing out that in the context of social interaction, a rich number and quantity of language contact is important for children's growth to It is important and closely related to his/her future literacy, academic achievement and health status.

Besides the parents, the adults around the children who are called caretaker give much influence in their language development. They help the children in every step of the language acquisition process. The caretaker speech is generally simplified speech style adopted by someone who spends a lot of time interacting with a young child (Yule, 1996:177). This phenomon then developed into so called Motherese or Parentese.

Nagata (2001:36) said, "Motherese or Parentese is the short of speech that children receive when they are young." The ability of parent language gives big impact to the

children language development. Sudartinah (2008) stated that parentese and baby talk conversation are very helpful in the language learning process. The advantage of this is that young children can increase their vocabulary, understand abstract concepts more easily, learn grammar naturally, and understand conversation routines. Practically, a lot of incorrect pronunciation or spelling will commonly happens during this process (Arifin, 2019). In short, although the conversation between parents and babies is not the only factor that leads to success in language learning, they make a huge contribution to language learning. Therefore, the caretaker must be careful to educate their child during the language acquisition stage. If the caretaker says the wrong speech, the children will imitate the wrong speech too. If the caretaker says the speech well, the children will learn to make the speech well too. This statement is in line with Fromkin's statement (2003:346) that children are able to learn language because adults speak to them in a special simplified language.

O'Grady and Dobrovolsky (1992:402) said that the children cannot distinguish among speech sound. It means that the children repeat words or phrases by the adults around them, but they do the mistakes in speech. They are unable to make a correction when they speak. Ferreira, Lucena, Machado-Nascimento, Alves, Renato Oliveira, Souza, Carvalho, Camargos Jr., and Parlato-Oliveira (2016) stated that the motherese is the effective and meaningful treatment to help and correct the mistakes in communication. So, the children have more productive and comprehensive speech. They are able to use the skills while they interact with the adults.

Clarissa and Zulfikar's (2018:275) study describes the way children develop their first language awareness of words

acquired from their language models, and the way teachers encourage children's word awareness among preschoolers. From 30 children in preschool, the way children speak and interact is completely different from the way adults speak. Children develop their word awareness with the help of multimedia knowledge, sources, reference materials, and explanations. At the same time, the interaction between children and their peers tends to adopt the usage and pronunciation of some wrong words

Ota, Davies-Jenkins, and Skarabela (2018) believe in the value of baby's speech not only to help babies learn words. In their research, they believe that babies who accept vocabulary input and have a higher incidence of these characteristics should have a faster overall vocabulary growth rate in the initial stage of vocabulary development. In other words, they set out to explore whether the use of words spoken by babies not only promoted early word learning, but also facilitated future vocabulary acquisition.

Wang and Lin's study (2013:122) in some similarities and also differences in the characteristics of motherese in English and in Chinese mandarin showed motherese has a special role in children's language development. It is of great help to the later development of children's language. The study showed the influence of motherese on their children's language development. As many mothers want to expose their newly born children to an English environment, they attach more importance to children's language development in order to found a good starting point. The similarities of the motherese between Western and Chinese can give them guidance to give stimuli both in Chinese and in English. By bearing the differences in their mind, they can use different stimuli respectively.

In this study, the writer focused on the phonological structures of the child's one-word stage in language acquisition at fifteen months old and the motherese role of child's one-word stage in language acquisition at fifteen months old. This fifteen months old lives with his parents and his brother. He learns two languages, Indonesian and Javanese.

## METHOD

The research design was descriptive qualitative. The writer analyzes the Phonological Deviance and the Motherese Role of fifteen months old boy. The writer did the research in Mr. Andi's home at Jln. Poncoleksono, RT.05 RW.02, Dsn. Nogo, Ds. Karangwaluh, Kec. Sampung Kab. Ponorogo. The subject of this research was a boy. The subject was fifteen months old. He was as the second child from the married teacher at elementary school. Both of them were the informants on this research. Techniques of collecting data were observation and interview. The writer did triangulation technique 1 to check the data validity. The data was analysed by Miles and Huberman's theory (in Sugiyono, 2010:91); data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion or verification.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data on the table consists of the subject and his caretaker's conversation during the research. There were some deviances in the subject's utterance.

### The Phonological Deviance in Child's One-Word stage at fifteen months old

Datum 1

The participants: Baby-Sitter, Brother, Subject

Conversation:

BS : *Ba..balon*

S : *iyu. Iyo.. (Seeing his brother)*

B : *he opo? Balon*

S : *ayo..ayo..aa (laugh)*

BS : *ndi balone..*

S : *iti..ti.*

BS : *iki endi? baloon..*

S : *ayooo (screaming loud)*

BS : *Balonnnn, gededik?*

S : *e de..*

BS : *ohh gede.. Warnane opo?ijo*

S : *ijo.*

### Child's Phonological Structure in Datum 1

Deviance Words	Correction Words	Child's Phonological Structure
		Consonant Simplification
iyu	Balon	/b/,/l/,/n/
Ayo	Balon	/b/,/l/,/n/
Iti	Iki	/k/
Ede	Gede	/g/

The table showed the phonological deviances in some words. The subject said "iyu", "ayo", "iti", "ede". Then his brother and baby-sitter disapproved with his words. They gave the correct words. There were "iyu and ayo" as "balon", "iti" as "iki" and "ede" as "gede". The subject omitted the consonant /b/,/l/,/k/,/g/. He only imitated the last words when the caretakers said to him.

Datum 2

The participants: Baby-sitter and Subject  
Conversation:

S : *(Knocking the door on his home) ikumm*

BS : *Walaikumsalam..*

*Masuk dik, masuk, dibukak.*

*Ga dikunci kok, masuk..*

S : *ncii...*

BS : *sing ngunci sopo?*

S : *tatak.*

BS : *He,,?*

S : *tatak..*

BS : *O..kakak.. nek ngunci pie? Ditutup pintune.. dikunci*

S : *pupup...*

BS : *tutup pintune..*

**Child's Phonological Structure in Datum 2**

Deviance Words	Correction Words	Child's Phonological Structure
		Consonant Simplification
Ikum	-	-
Nci	Kunci	/k/
Tatak	Kakak	/t/
Pupup	Tutup	/p/

The subject and his baby-sitter were sitting on porch on his home. He pretended to knock the door. The baby-sitter answered what he said. The phonological deviances were "ikum", "nci", "tatak", "pupup". The correction words from his BS were "nci" as "kunci", "tatak" as "kakak", "pupup" as "tutup". The words "ikum" is not corrected. "ikum" as "assalamualaikum". The subject omitted /k/ in words "kunci. He got difficulty to say that. The other was the changing of /t/in "kakak" and /p/in "tutup. The subject was difficult to replay the same words.

**Datum 3**

The participants: Mb. Alifah (friends, 8 years old) and Subject

Conversation:

S : *Cinn...*

A : *bensin,,*

S : *cin... (Playing his cars)..*

A : *ndang ditutup..*

S : *ecinn..pupuk..*

A : *ndang dtutup kene.. dilakokne neh, dilakokne.*

**Child's Phonological Structure in Datum 3**

Deviance Words	Correction Words	Child's Phonological Structure	
		Consonant Simplification	Harmony
Cin	Bensin	/b/,/n/,/s/	
Ecinn	Bensin	/b/,/n/,/s/	
Pupuk	tutup	/p/	/p/ -> /k/

The previous conversation showed the subject were playing car with his friend. His friend tried to play and communicate with the subject. There were some phonological deviances in some words, such as "cin", "ecin", "pupuk". His friend disapproved with the subject's saying. The friend corrected words are, "cin"/"ecin" as "bensin", "pupuk" as "tutup". In consonant/b/,/n/,/s/on words "bensin". The subjects omitted some of consonants because it was too much to say. He could not imitate the caretaker said.

**Datum 4**

The participants: baby-sitter and subject  
Conversation:

S : *(doing sujud,shalat)*

BS : *Subhana rabbiyal a'la wabihammdih. Allohuakbar.*

*Tangane ngene.. ayo. berdiri disik, berdiri. Allohuakbar.*

S : *alloh babang.. (doing sujud) (want to left his BS) Atii.. atii*

BS : *He.. mati..*

S : *(running)*

BS : *Awas kodok eh ulo..*

*Neng kene ae. Kabur..kabur...*

S : *(walking to his BS, and laugh) kabung....*

BS : *kabur*

### Child's Phonological Structure in Datum 4

Deviance Words	Correction Words	Child's Phonological Structure	
		Consonant Simplification	Harmony
Alloh babang	Allohu akbar	-	/r//n/ -> /g/
Ati Kabung	Mati Kabur	/m/	/r//n/ -> /g/

The previous situation showed the subject did sujud (shalat) with his baby-sitter. Baby-sitter also showed the movement by her hands. But, the subject said the wrong words, like "allohbabang", "ati", "abung". His baby-sitter disapproved with his saying. She gave correction as "allohuakbar", "mati", kabur". So, the subject got more correction word. The consonant simplification was done in words "mati" become "ati". The subject omitted/m/. The harmony done in words "akbar" become babang and "kabur" become "kabung". The subject was difficult to say/r/because it needed the vibration when it was said.

### The kinds of Motherese that was given by the caretakers to subject

Datum 5

The participants: Baby-Sitter, Brother, Subject

The Motherese in Subject's Conversation:

BS : Ba..balon

S : *iyu. Iyo.. (seeing his brother)*

B : he opo? Balon

S : *ayo..ayo..aa (laugh)*

BS : ndi balone..

S : *iti..ti.*

BS : iki endi? baloon..

S : *ayooo (screaming loud)*

BS : Balonnnn, gede dik?

S : *e de..*

BS : ohh gede.. Warnane opo? ijo

S : *ijo.*

The kinds of motherese role in that conversation were vocabulary: simple and short. "Balon" was the word that given by the baby sitter and his brother to the subject. He was very interested because he never saw it before. He always responds in every conversation. He could repeat the color of balon clearly as the word "ijo".

Datum 6

The participants: Baby-sitter and Subject

The motherese in subject's conversation:

S : *(Knocking the door on his home) ikumm*

BS : Walaikumsalam..

*Masuk dik, masuk, dibukak.*

Ga dikunci kok,, masuk..

S : *ncii...*

BS : sing ngunci sopo?

S : *tatak.*

BS : He..?

S : *tatak..*

BS : O.. kakak.. nek ngunci pie? Ditutup pintune.. dikunci

S : *pupup...*

BS : tutup pintune..

The motherese role was short sentences and simple structures. The subject would respond fast when the baby-sitter asked who locked the door and repeated her short sentences. The subject also imitated what his baby-sitter said.

Datum 7

The participants: Mb. Alifah (friend, 8 years old) and Subject

The motherese in subject's conversation:

S : *Cinn...*

A : bensin..

S : *cin... (playing his cars)..*

A : ndang ditutup..

S : *ecinn.. pupuk..*

A : ndang ditutup kene..dilakokne neh, dilakokne.

The previous kind of motherese role was vocabulary: simple and short. The speech of his friend made the subject cheerful because they often played together. So, his friend knew about the subject more. The subject responds it in this conversation.

Datum 8

The participants: Baby-sitter and Subject

The motherese in subject's conversation:

S : *(doing sujud, shalat)*

BS : *Subhana rabbiyal a'la wabihamdih. Allohuakbar.*

*Tangane ngene.. ayo berdiri disik, berdiri. Allohuakbar.*

S : *alloh babang.. (doing sujud)*

*(want to left his BS) Atii.. atii*

BS : *He.. mati..*

S : *(running)*

BS : *Awas kodok eh ulo..*

*Neng kene ae. Kabur.. kabur...*

S : *(walking to his BS, and laugh)*

*kabung....*

BS : *kabur...*

The kinds of motherese role was immediately and concreteness. The baby-sitter knew the subject did sujud because he followed his mom when she did shalattarawih at mosque. This child did some movement on shalat. The baby-sitter gave the good responds through the words: "allohuakbar", "Subhana rabbiyala'la wabihamdih" to him immediately. Then the subject followed some of the baby-sitter's word. From those previous discussions, the conclusion was the language acquisition of child's one-word stage at fifteen months old there were phonological deviance such as the consonant simplification and harmony. The dominant motherese roles were short sentences and simple structures and vocabulary: simple and short. The caretakers always used two languages, Javanese and

Indonesian. Javanese is the language that often use in the subject's daily conversation.

## CONCLUSION

The writer concludes about the phonological structure and the motherese role in child's one-word stage in fifteen months old. In child phonological structures, the subject produces some words in one-word stage. There were three child's phonological structures such as: the consonant simplification, stopping, and harmony. The dominant phonological structure that is done by the subject is the consonant simplification. The subject often says or imitates the last word from the caretakers. There are seven characteristics of motherese. The most dominant of the motherese roles which is given by the caretakers to fifteen months old child are short sentences and simple structures and vocabulary: simple and short. It makes the subject is easy to produce and save more words.

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